

Message Text

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ACTION HA-05

INFO OCT-01 AF-10 IO-13 ISO-00 ABF-01 OMB-01 TRSE-00
FDRE-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 NSAE-00 NSCE-00 SSO-00
USIE-00 INRE-00 PM-05 H-01 INR-10 L-03 PA-01
SP-02 SS-15 AID-05 EB-08 OES-07 AGRE-00 HEW-04
EUR-12 /104 W
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O 161739Z MAR 78
FM USMISSION GENEVA
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 7302
INFO AMEMBASSY ADDIS ABABA PRIORITY
AMEMBASSY DJIBOUTI PRIORITY
AMEMBASSY MOGADISCIO PRIORITY
AMEMBASSY NAIROBI PRIORITY
USMISSION USUN NEW YORK PRIORITY

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E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: SREF, DJ, ET, KE, SO
SUBJECT: OGADEN REFUGEES

REF: A. STATE 66174; B. STATE 65662; C. NAIROBI 4043

1. MESSAGE CONTAINED REF A WAS PASSED VERBALLY AND BY
LETTER TO DEPUTY HIGH COMMISSIONER FOR REFUGEES MORNING
MARCH 15.

2. SUBSEQUENT MEETINGS WITH RELEVANT UNHCR RESPONSIBLE
OFFICERS HAVE REVEALED FOLLOWING INFORMATION CONCERNING
PROBLEM IN AFFECTED COUNTRIES:

3. SOMALIA.

A. FORMAL REQUEST FROM SOMALI GOVERNMENT FOR ASSISTANCE
TO REFUGEES RECEIVED BY UNHCR IN NOTE VERBAL FEBRUARY 8,
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IN RESPONSE TO WHICH UNHCR MISSION DEPARTED GENEVA FOR
MOGADISCIO FEBRUARY 13. SOMALI GOVERNMENT STATED THERE
WERE 300,000 "REFUGEES/DISPLACED PERSONS" IN-COUNTRY, OF
WHICH 32,000 WERE IN CAMPS. THE REMAINING 268,000 WERE
DISPERSED THROUGHOUT COUNTRY, LIVING WITH TRIBES AND KIN-
FOLK. LATTER EXTREMELY DIFFICULT TO IDENTIFY. FIRST
MISSION INVESTIGATED NEEDS OF 32,000 IN CAMPS, OF WHICH

TWO WERE VISITED BETWEEN FEBRUARY 14 AND 19 (OF TOTAL OF SIX) HAVING 26,000 OF TOTAL. AS A RESULT OF THIS VISIT, PROGRAM DRAWN UP FOR PROVISION OF RELIEF SUPPLIES, BLANKETS, UTENSILS, DETERGENTS, SOAP, AGRICULTURAL TOOLS, EDUCATIONAL MATERIALS, HEALTH SUPPLIES, ETC., TO TOTAL BUDGET OF \$250,000. AFTER DISCUSSIONS WITH USAID DIRECTOR AND DIRECTOR OF EEC MISSION, UNHCR GROUP DETERMINED THERE WERE NO EMERGENCY FOOD REQUIREMENTS IN SOMALIA FOR IDENTIFIED REFUGEES. MISSION WAS, HOWEVER, UNABLE TO VISIT NORTHERN PART OF COUNTRY.

B. IN FEBRUARY 24 LETTER TO SOMALI GOVERNMENT, UNHCR OFFERED \$250,000 TO SOMALI RED CRESCENT FOR ABOVE PROGRAM (IT PREFERS TO DEAL THROUGH RED CRESCENT, RATHER THAN THROUGH SOMALI GOVERNMENT AND PARTY, WHICH IT CONTENDS IS UNWIELDY AND SLOW-MOVING STRUCTURE). LETTER STATED UNHCR WISHED TO SEND SECOND MISSION TO COMPLETE FACT-FINDING, PARTICULARLY IN NORTHERN PART OF COUNTRY, TO STUDY SITUATION OF "REFUGEES/DISPLACED PERSONS" OUTSIDE CAMPS, AND TO DISCUSS FURTHER MEASURES FOR REMAINDER OF 1978. LETTER PROPOSED APPOINTMENT OF CHARGE OF UNHCR MISSION TO SOMALIA TO COORDINATE AID PROGRAM AND SUGGESTED DATE FOR SECOND VISIT IN MID-MARCH.

C. AFTER REJECTING DATES OF MARCH 11, 13 AND 15 FOR SECOND VISIT AS INCONVENIENT, SOMALI GOVERNMENT HAS JUST CONSENTED LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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TO RECEIVE VISIT ON MARCH 19. ACCOMPANYING UNHCR DESK OFFICER GEORGE IACOVU ON THIS VISIT WILL BE STEFAN BODEMAR (SWEDISH) WHO WILL REMAIN IN SOMALIA IN CHARGE OF UNHCR MISSION. (UNHCR CONSIDERS THAT BODEMAR SHOULD BE ABLE TO WORK WELL WITH THE SWEDISH ADVISER TO SOMALI RED CRESCENT).

D. IACOVU STATES THAT SECOND VISIT IS DESIGNED PRINCIPALLY FOR NORTHERN AREA, FOR INSTANCE TO HARGEISA WHERE THEY WILL SPEND ABOUT TWO DAYS, AND WHERE THE MAJOR INFLUX OF REFUGEES FROM JIJIGA AND HARAR ARE REPORTED ASSEMBLED. DEPENDING UPON THE FINDINGS OF THIS MISSION, THE INITIAL \$250,000 MIGHT BE AUGMENTED TO THE MAXIMUM \$500,000 THAT MAY BE DRAWN FROM THE UNHCR EMERGENCY FUND. AS FIRST ORDER OF BUSINESS, IACOVU WILL SIGN AGREEMENT FOR INITIAL \$250,000 IN MOGADISCIO. HE HAS ASSURANCES THAT REQUEST FOR ADDITIONAL \$250,000 IF SUBSTANTIATED AS A RESULT OF HIS FINDINGS, WILL BE SYMPATHETICALLY RECEIVED. AS ORIGINALLY PLANNED, VISIT WILL BE ON ORDER OF TEN DAYS.

E. IACOVU'S PRESENT UNDERSTANDING IS THAT FOOD IS NOT IN SHORT SUPPLY AND THAT, IN FACT, THREE SHIPLOADS OF

AMERICAN FOODSTUFFS ARE CURRENTLY ENROUTE TO SOMALIA. ACCORDINGLY, IT IS HIS PRESENT INTENTION TO CONCENTRATE UNHCR EFFORTS ON OTHER NEEDS. HE STATED PARENTHETICALLY THAT BRITISH HAVE ALREADY MADE DFFER OF ASSISTANCE IN FORM OF CISTERN TRUCKS AND OTHER EQUIPMENT. IACOVOU HAS IMPRESSION THAT IN PAST SOMALI GOVERNMENT HAS BEEN ABLE TO OBTAIN MONEY, FOOD AND OTHER SUPPORT RELATIVELY EASILY, AND THAT NEED FOR JUSTIFICATION AND ACCOUNTABILITY HAS NOT BEEN COMPREHENDED. THUS, DURING HIS FEBRUARY VISIT HE FOUND CONDITIONS CHAOTIC AS CONCERNS MANAGEMENT OF SUPPLIES, STOCKS AND DISTRIBUTION. HE EMPHASIZED THAT THIS WAS NOT A QUESTION OF CORRUPTION BUT SIMPLY ONE OF LACK OF ORDER.

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INFO OCT-01 AF-10 IO-13 ISO-00 ABF-01 OMB-01 TRSE-00
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4. ETHIOPIA.

A. UNHCR HAS NO PROGRAM FOR DISPLACED PERSONS FROM THE OGADEN IN ETHIOPIA. HERE ONLY THEIR GOOD OFFICES CAN BE OFFERED, SINCE THE DISPLACED PERSONS CONCERNED ARE ETHIOPIAN CITIZENS. UNHCR GENEVA UNDERSTANDS THAT NEGOTIATION FOR U.N. ACTIVITY WITHIN ETHIOPIA IS CURRENTLY GOING ON IN NEW YORK AND LITTLE KNOWLEDGE OF ITS STATUS HAS COME THROUGH TO GENEVA. IT WAS POINTED OUT THAT UNHCR IS WELL STAFFED IN ETHIOPIA TO HANDLE AN ASSISTANCE PROGRAM SHOULD IT BE DEVELOPED.

5. KENYA.

AS INDICATED REF C, GOK WAS NOT ANXIOUS TO HAVE UNHCR DEVELOP ACTIVE PROGRAM IN KENYA. IT FINALLY CONSENTED TO LOW-KEY EFFORT ONLY, CONSISTING OF ASSISTANCE TO BORANA TRIBESMEN ON BORDER FOR MOVEMENT OF FOOD AT PROGRAM COST OF APPROXIMATELY \$15,000. UNHCR OFFERS OF ASSISTANCE AS LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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NEEDED ARE STILL AVAILABLE TO GOK SHOULD IT WISH TO AVAIL ITSELF OF THEM.

6. DJIBOUTI.

A. RECENT UNHCR VISIT TO DJIBOUTI (GENEVA 3917) REVEALED CONTINUING INFLUX OF REFUGEES FROM OGADEN. "SEVERAL HUNDRED" REFUGEES WERE NOTED ARRIVING BY U.N. MISSION MARCH 10. THERE ARE NOW TWO REFUGEE CAMPS, ONE AT ALI SABIEH WITH 5,000, THE OTHER AT DIKHIL WITH 3,800. IN ADDITION, SOME 500 TO 600 OGADEN REFUGEES CAN BE ADDED, BRINGING THE TOTAL FIGURE TO SOME 10,000.

B. BY THE TIME THE UNHCR MISSION MEMBER LEFT NIGHT OF MARCH 11, ETHIOPIAN TROOPS WERE TWENTY KILOMETERS FROM BORDER AND MOST REFUGEES COULD THEREFORE BE PRESUMED TO HAVE ALREADY ARRIVED.

C. IN ADDITION TO 10,000 OGADEN REFUGEES, THERE ARE SEVERAL OTHER GROUPS IN DJIBOUTI, ACCORDING TO UNHCR, INCLUDING THOSE FROM ERITREA (400) AND FROM ADDIS ABABA (300). BEYOND THESE, UNHCR REP WAS TOLD BY PRESIDENT THERE ARE SOME 10,000 TO 30,000 ISSA REFUGEES IN DJIBOUTI WHO ARE HOUSED WITH LOCAL RESIDENTS. UNHCR ASSISTANCE IS NOT EXPECTED TO BE ASKED FOR THE ISSA GROUP, HOWEVER, SINCE WERE THIS DONE, UNHCR ASSISTANCE WOULD HAVE TO BE REQUESTED FOR FOR ALL THE NEEDY RESIDENTS OF DJIBOUTI AS WELL.

D. INITIAL 1978 UNHCR PROGRAM FOR DJIBOUTI WAS BASED ON MUCH LOWER FIGURE OF 6,000, AND IS THEREFORE INSUFFICIENT TO PRESENT NEEDS. ACCORDINGLY, UNHCR IS IN PROCESS OF PREPARING NEW BUDGET, AND IS AWAITING KEY INFORMATION FROM DJIBOUTI WITHIN NEXT WEEK OR TEN DAYS WHICH WILL PERMIT IT TO COMPLETE PROGRAM JUSTIFICATION.

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E. PROJECTS WILL BE DIVIDED IN TWO PARTS, ONE FOR RURAL

AND THE OTHER FOR URBAN REFUGEES. UNHCR STATES THESE
PROGRAMS, SOME OF WHICH ARE JOINT, HAVE BEEN DISCUSSED
WITH OUR REPRESENTATIVES IN DJIBOUTI, EMBASSY AND USAID,
AND ARE THEREFORE PRESUMABLY KNOWN TO DEPARTMENT. HOW-
EVER, SHOULD DETAILS AS SEEN BY UNHCR BE DESIRED, PLEASE
NOTIFY MISSION.
VANDEN HEUVEL

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